Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (currently amended): An airbag apparatus, comprising:

an airbag module including an airbag configured to expand by gas inflation;

at least one covering device having a closing position and an open position;

~~an airbag configured to expand by gas inflation,~~ said airbag being accommodated behind said at least one covering device when said at least one covering device is in the closing position;

a mechanism configured to pull said at least one covering device from the closing position to the open position in order to allow an expansion of the airbag;

said mechanism (M) including a first mechanism component (M1), which is ~~coupled~~ firmly connected to the airbag module (B),

and a second mechanism component (M2), which is ~~coupled~~ firmly connected to the covering device (K);

said airbag module (B) forming, together with the first mechanism component (M1), a structural assembly to be handled as a structural unit ready for installation; and

said second mechanism component being configured to be installed separately from said first mechanism component.

Claim 2 (previously amended): The airbag apparatus according to claim 1, wherein, during mounting and demounting, the first mechanism component (M1) and the second mechanism component (M2) do not touch one another and are coupled to one another only in a crash.

Claim 3 (previously amended): The airbag apparatus according to claim 1, wherein traction elements, traction ropes (1) or traction bands (16) are mounted, as integral parts of the second mechanism component (M2), on or within a reinforcing box (4) which supports an orifice (O) for the emergence of the airbag in an instrument panel (V).

Claim 4 (previously amended): The airbag apparatus according to claim 3, wherein the traction elements, as integral parts

of the second mechanism component (M2), are combined in a hook (5) positioned in relation to at least one driving bolt (10, 15, 19, 22, 27) as an integral part of the first mechanism component (M1), in turn as integral parts of the second mechanism component (M2).

Claim 5 (previously amended): The airbag apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the second mechanism component (M2) of the coupling mechanism (M) and coverings thereof are led through pockets (13), which are integrated in an extruded profile of the airbag housing (G), and, on the opposite side, through putaways of a reinforcing box (4).

Claim 6 (previously amended): The airbag apparatus according to claim 5, wherein a rope loop or traction band loop (17) and correspondingly shaped or bent driving bolts (15) are provided.

Claim 7 (canceled).

Claim 8 (currently amended): A mounting method for an airbag apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the mechanism (M) contains a first mechanism component (M1) which is ~~coupled~~ firmly connected to the airbag module (B), so that the airbag module (B) forms, together with the first mechanism component

(M1), a structural assembly to be handled as a structural unit ready for installation, and contains a second mechanism component (M2) which is ~~coupled~~ firmly connected to the covering device (K), and ~~in that~~ wherein, during or after the installation of the airbag apparatus (A) behind a vehicle interior trim panel, the first mechanism component (M1) is brought into an active position with respect to the second mechanism component (M2).

Claim 9 (previously amended): The mounting method according to claim 8, wherein, during or after the installation of the airbag apparatus (A) behind a vehicle interior trim panel, the first mechanism component (M1) and the second mechanism component (M2) are coupled to one another.

Claim 10 (previously amended): An operating method for an airbag apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the first mechanism component (M1) and the second mechanism component (M2) are coupled actively to one another only by means of a release of the airbag apparatus.